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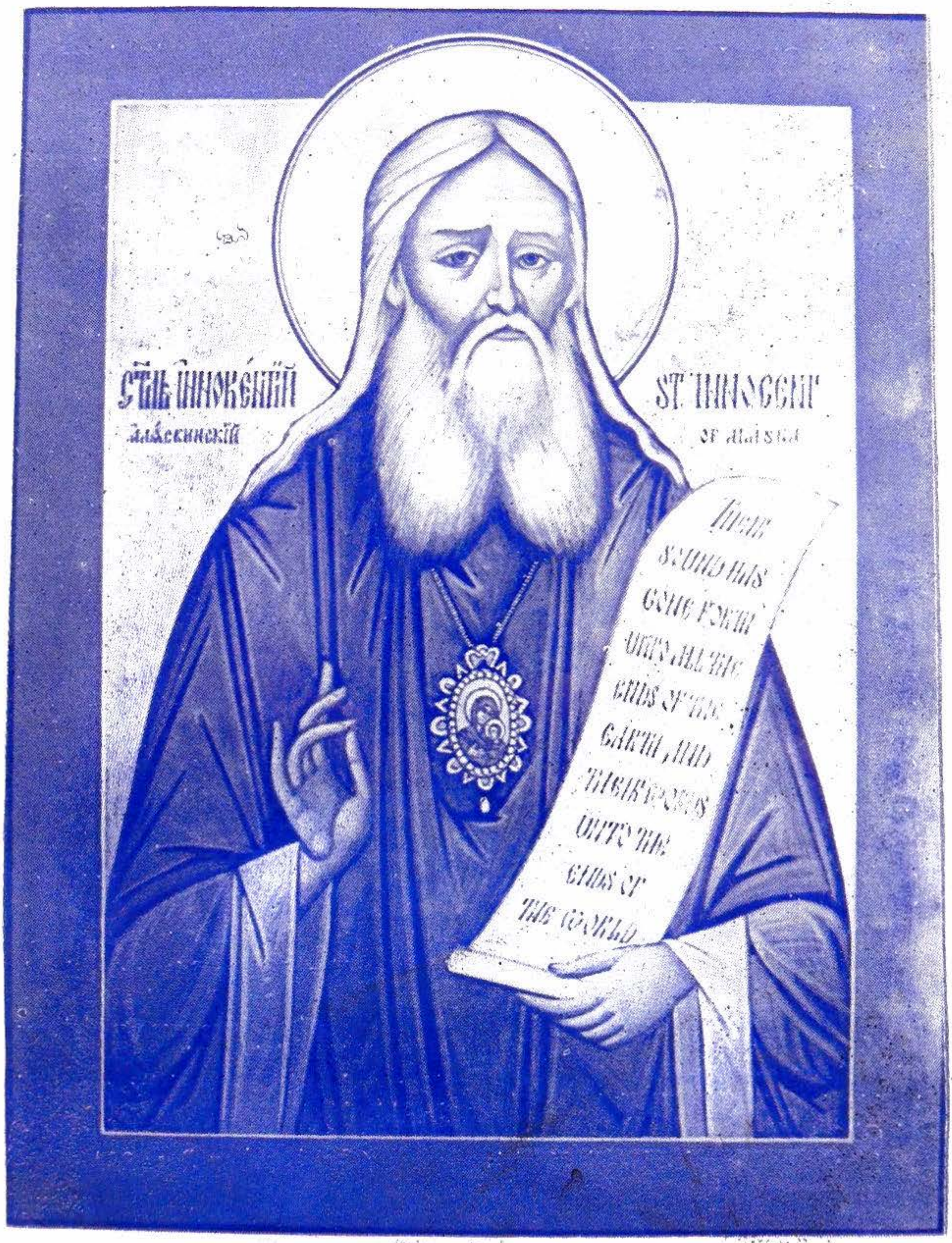

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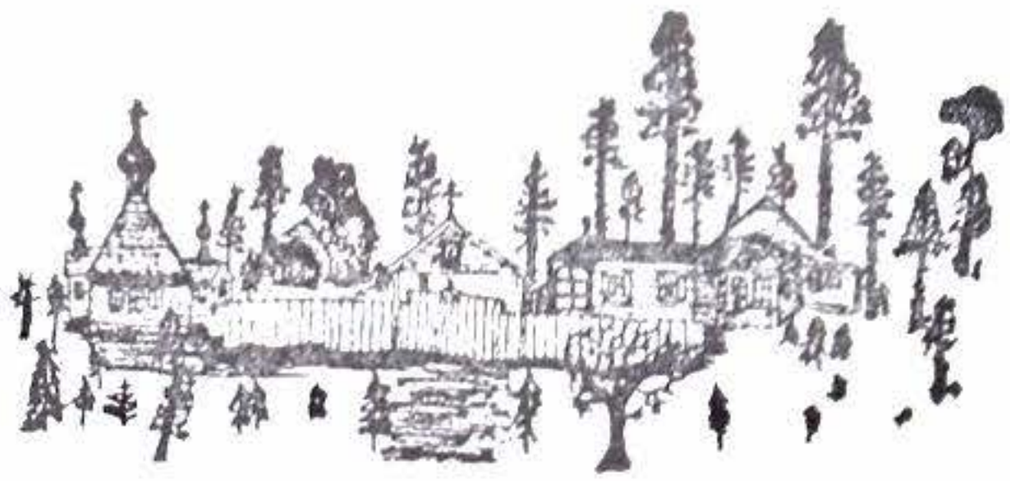

THE GLORIFICATION OF BLESSED XENIA
September 10-11/23-24, 1978

1. The Services of Glorification at the Synod, New York City

The long-awaited Glorification (Canonization) of Blessed Xenia of Petersburg, the renowned ascetic of the 18th century, occurred on September 10-11/23-24, 1978. Her ascetic life of many years as a fool for Christ's sake, the gift of clairvoyance manifested in her, and her constant help to people in their various sorrows and misfortunes — made her deeply respected among the residents of St. Petersburg still during her own lifetime, and her venerators only increased after her death. For the course of 200 years the veneration of Blessed Xenia has continued among the Russian people, despite all the attempts of the athiest regime for the last 60 years to annihilate the Orthodox Faith itself, as well as everything bound up with it.

Likewise, literally in all places of the diaspora of the Russian emigration there is to be observed a profound veneration of Blessed Xenia, a proof of which is the abundant material concerning recent miraculous help obtained by her prayers; this has been collected in the past six years by the Fund established in her name. There are about a hundred such cases, seventy of which have been printed in the booklet issued by the Fund for the day of Glorification.

The question of Blessed Xenia's Glorification was considered several times at the Councils of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. The final decision of the Council of Bishops was that the solemnity of Glorification should be held on September 10-11/23-24, 1978, in the Synodal Church of the Mother of God of the Sign (the Kursk Icon) in New York City.

The solemn Divine services on Saturday, Sept. 10/23, were: the final panikhida for Blessed Xenia, and then the All-night Vigil with the Rite of Glorification. On Sunday, Sept. 11/24, there were the Liturgy and the first moleben to the newly-glorified saint. The services were headed by His Eminence, Metropolitan Philaret, and 14 bishops, with 65 priests and deacons concelebrating. The Synodal choir sang in augmented numbers.

Many of the faithful were expected to attend the services of Glorification, both those from New York and its environs and pilgrims from afar: from California, Canada, and even far-away Australia. However, the actuality exceeded all expectations. Already before the beginning of the panikhida the faithful had filled the whole church and adjoining balcony: the same thing happened on Sunday. Many people also were in the church yard, where before the services there were sold icons of the saint, books and other publications and articles especially prepared for this day.

(Continued on Page 93)

THE ORTHODOX WORD

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of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood

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the late *John (Maximovitch)*, Archbishop of
Western America and San Francisco, Russian
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COVER: Saint Innocent of Alaska, icon prepared for the centenary of his death.

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SAINT INNOCENT OF ALASKA
March 31, 1879

Saint Innocent of Alaska
1879-1979

THE YEAR 1979 marks the hundredth anniversary of the death of a great hierarch who might well be called the St. Paul of America. His work as a missionary on this continent is an inspiring example of a heart aflame with the love of Christ and His Church.

Brought up in Irkutsk, Siberia, John Venianinov went, as a young man in 1824, to Alaska as a missionary, taking with him wife, mother, and children. Settling in Unalaska, he built all by himself, a house for his family and a church. He studied the local languages, compiled an Aleutian alphabet and grammar, and himself wrote the first work to appear in the Aleutian language. He translated the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Divine Liturgy, and a short catechism into Aleutian. He opened a missionary school with a dormitory for 300 boys and taught not only grammar and catechism, but various crafts as well, being himself an inventor. He was also a physician to the local populace, and wrote valuable geographical, ethnographic and social descriptions of the islands. When he became a bishop in Sitka, receiving the name of Innocent after the patron saint of Irkutsk and the Far Eastern missions, he founded a seminary there. As an archbishop later in Siberia he travelled thousands of miles under extremely difficult conditions in the performance of his pastoral duties. Finally, in 1868 he was elected the successor of the famous Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, according to the wish of the latter, who after his first talk with him said: "There is something of the Apostles in him." In this post he organized the Orthodox Missionary Society, which published a magazine devoted entirely to missionary work and serving as a point of contact for all missionary laborers: *Pravoslavny Blagovestnik (The Orthodox Good Tidings).*

The physical, and even more the psychological, conditions and obstacles facing the Orthodox Missionary in America today are quite different from those St. Innocent faced a century ago. The Christian life, however, has not changed. In his book, *Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven,* written originally in Aleut and since translated into many languages, he set forth the basic principles of the Christian life, emphasizing especially the carrying of one's cross in the daily toil of a life oriented not to oneself but to Christ. This is an aspect of Christianity not often emphasized today, but it is precisely that without which there is no Christianity at all.

Caught between the ever-increasing world anarchy and anti-Christianity that herald the approach of the lawless Antichrist, and the pointless optimism of an ecumenism that only uses Christianity for its own worldly goal, all who would be faithful to the Lord in these perilous times must return to this absolutely central message of Christian living. Divine Providence has dispersed Orthodox Christians throughout the world, not by chance, but to be witnesses of Christian Truth and examples of Christian life. Today our very existence in non-Orthodox lands is a missionary witness; we are each of us responsible for carrying on, in some small way, that part of the labors of St. Innocent which is not regional but universal, because it concerns personal holiness.

VITA PATRUM

THE LIFE OF THE FATHERS

By Saint Gregory of Tours

CHAPTER FOUR

Saint Quintianus the Bishop

EXAMPLE OF CHRISTIAN CONSTANCY AND LOVE
IN A TIME OF CONFUSION

EVERYONE WHO KNOWS that he possesses a body of earthly matter must so conduct himself as not to give himself over to those things which he knows to be earthly and sweet to the flesh, because, according to the Apostle Paul, *the works of the flesh are manifest* (Gal. 5:19) as being full of impurity and iniquity, fit to make the man who seeks them soiled and dirty, and at last to give him over to eternal weeping. Now the fruit of the Spirit is all that which is profitable and flourishing in God, all that which in this age, by the mortification of the flesh, rejoices the soul and assures it of eternal joys for the future age.

For this reason, we who are now in the body ought to consider for ourselves what God has accomplished in His saints, in whom — as in a tabernacle adorned with various flowers of virtue which their merits make to shine with a vivid brilliance, establishing His abode and stretching forth the majesty of His right arm in them — He has vouchsafed in His mercy to accomplish what they have asked, as we may see in blessed Quintianus, about whom we are now going to speak. He was a man of noble mind and remarkable for generosity, in whom the Lord has accomplished the works of His justice. So then, let not the following of the flesh lower us and draw us to earthly things after the manner of cattle, but rather, after the example of the saints, wisely understanding the things of God, let the Spirit raise us toward heavenly and eternal works; neither let our mind be conquered by impure acts, but let victorious wisdom reign and for our deeds gain the throne of eternity.

1. The most blessed Quintianus, an African by nation, and, as some say, a nephew of Bishop Faustus, who, it is related, resurrected his mother — this Quintianus was endowed with sanctity, resplendent with virtues, fervent with the fire of Christian love, and adorned with the flowers of chastity. He was elected to the bishopric of Rodez and was ordained. In this episcopate his virtues underwent a new growth, and, as he was always advancing in the works of God, he had the holy body of the blessed bishop Amantius brought into the church he had built in his name; but such a deed did not please the Saint. Whereupon it happened that he appeared to him in a dream and said: "Because you have done this brazen thing and displaced my bones which were resting in peace, behold, I will remove you from this city, and you will be an exile in another land; nevertheless, you will not be deprived of the honor which you enjoy."

And in fact, not long after that a scandal arose between the citizens and the bishop, and the Goths who were then in the city conceived the suspicion that the bishop wished to submit to the authority of the Franks; having taken counsel together, they had the thought of slaying him with the sword. When this was made known to the holy man, he rose during the night, and leaving the city with his most faithful servants, he came to Clermont in the Auvergne. There he was received by the holy Bishop Eufrasius, who had succeeded the late Bishop Aprunculus, and who gave him houses, fields, and vineyards. He was treated with the greatest respect by that bishop and by the bishop of Lyons. He was indeed a venerable old man and a true servant of God.

Now when Saint Eufrasius died (515 A.D.), the people elected in his place Saint Quintianus. Alchima and Placidana, the wife and sister of Apollinaris,* went to Saint Quintianus and said: "It should be enough for you in your old age, holy prelate, that you have already been appointed to one bishopric. Won't you, who are so pious, allow your servant Apollinaris to occupy the episcopate here? If he does gain this high honor, he will obey your command in all things. You will give orders, and he will execute your wishes. Please listen sympathetically to this humble proposal of ours."

"What can I do for you," asked Quintianus, "I who have no control whatever over this election? I certainly ask nothing more than that the Church should give me enough to eat each day, so that I may devote myself to prayer."

When they had heard this reply, the two women sent Apollinaris to King Theoderic.** He took many gifts with him, and he was given the bishop-

*The son of St. Sidonius Appollinaris, who had been Bishop of Clermont from 472 to 488.
**A Frank, one of the four sons of King Clovis who divided the latter's kingdom on his death in 511.

ric. When he had been bishop for only four months, he died.***

When this was made known to King Theoderic, he ordered Saint Quintianus to be bishop in place of Apollinaris and all the authority of the Church to be given over to him, saying, "It was because of the zeal of his love for us that he was cast out from his own city."

Messengers were sent to Clermont. The local bishops and the townsfolk were called together, and they elected Quintianus to the bishopric of the city, where he was the fourteenth prelate to rule the diocese.*

After this, when Saint Quintianus was bishop in that city, a certain Proculus, who had been ordained priest for money, gave him many injuries, and taking away from him all power over the Church's goods, scarcely left him enough for his daily needs. But when the bishop entreated the wiser citizens regarding this, all his authority was returned to him, and he kept such snares at a distance from him. Remembering, nevertheless, the injuries he had received, as aforetime the Apostle Paul regarding Alexander, so also Quintianus whenever speaking of Proculus said, "Proculus the publican did me much harm; the Lord will requite him according to his deeds" (compare II Timothy 4:14). This indeed came to pass in what followed.

2. The blessed man was assiduous in prayer, and he loved his people so much that when Theodoric came with his army to besiege the city (525 A.D.), the Saint of God spent the night in psalmody, going about the walls; and in order that God would quickly vouchsafe to succor the land and its people he prayed earnestly with vigils and fasting. The king Theodoric, just when he thought to throw down the city's walls, was softened by the Lord's mercy and by the prayers of His priest whom the king was thinking to send into exile. And during the night, seized with fear, he leapt from his bed and strove to flee alone by the public highway. He had lost his wits and no longer knew what he was doing. When his men saw this, they tried to restrain him, and did so only with difficulty, exhorting him to fortify himself with the saving sign of the Cross. Then Hilpingus, one of his dukes, drew near to the king and said, "Listen, most glorious king, to the counsels of my littleness. See, the walls of that city are very strong, and great fortifications defend it. And in order that Your Majesty recognize this more fully, I need only to speak of the churches of the saints which are about the city's walls; further, the bishop of this place is great before God. Do not do what you have in mind; do no evil to the bishop, and do not

***These three paragraphs have been added from *The History of the Franks* (III, 2), where St. Gregory speaks of these things in greater detail than in *The Life of the Fathers.*

* This paragraph has also been added from *The History of the Franks*, III, 2.

destroy the city." The king received this counsel favorably and gave the order that no one be harmed within eight miles of the city. No one doubted that this was granted by the prayer of the holy Bishop.

Then too, when the walls of the fortress of Vollore were broken by the incoming troops, the priest Proculus was hacked to pieces by the sword before the altar of the church, and the Lord thus requited him according to his deeds, as the bishop was wont to say. I should not be surprised if it were Proculus' fault that the fortress was allowed to fall into enemy hands, for until then it had always been inviolate.*

3. After the massacre and desolation of Clermont, Hortensius, one of the senators who was acting as count of the city, had one of the Saint's relatives, Honoratus by name, unjustly detained in the street. This was immediately made known to the blessed man. Through his friends he requested the count to grant an audience and to order him released, but he gained nothing. Then the blessed old man had himself taken to the place where Honoratus was being held, and when he was announced he begged the soldiers to let him go; but they, full of fear, dared not obey the Bishop. "Then quickly take me to the house of Hortensius" — for he was very old and could not walk. His servants carried him to the house of Hortensius, where he shook off against it the dust from his sandals, saying, "Cursed be this house, cursed also forever those who dwell in it; may it become deserted, and may there be no one to live in it." And all the people said, "Amen." And he added, "I ask, O Lord, that no one of this family, which has not obeyed its bishop, be raised to the episcopal dignity."

And as soon as the bishop had retired, all those of the family who were in that house were stricken with fever, and after being sick for a short time they gave up the ghost. When this had lasted for three days, Hortensius, seeing none of his servants survive, feared lest he perish himself, and went in mourning to the holy man and cast himself at his feet, begging his pardon with tears. The Saint granted it to him indulgently and sent holy water to the house; when it was thrown on the walls, immediately the sickness went away and great power appeared there. Those who had been afflicted were healed, and those who were healthly did not become sick later.**

At that time there was a local official called Lytigius who kept plotting against Saint Quintianus. The holy bishop went so far as to demean himself at

*This last sentence has been added from St. Gregory's words in *The History of the Franks*, III, 13.

**However, St. Gregory notes in another place that "the pronouncement which God had made through the mouth of St. Quintianus could not be changed," and no one of this family was ever made bishop, even when they were considered for this position. (See *The History of the Franks*, IV, 35.)

this man's feet, but even then Lytigius showed him no respect. In fact, he once went so far as to make fun of the Bishop to his wife. She had more sense than her husband. "Quintianus may be humbled today," she said, "but that will never do you any good." Only three days later messengers arrived from the king's court. Lytigius was bound and dragged off with his wife and children. He disappeared and was never seen again in Clermont.***

4. This holy bishop was very learned in ecclesiastical writings, and also generous in almsgiving. Indeed, whenever he would hear a poor man cry out, he would say, "Help, I beg you, this poor man and give him everything needful. For you do not know, O heedless ones, whether this is not the very One Who has commanded in His Gospel that He be taken care of in the person of the least of the poor ones" (Matt. 25:40).

He also cast out demons, who would confess their evil actions. Having come into the monastery of Canbidobrinse (in the diocese of Clermont), he found there a possessed man who was prey to horrible convulsions, and he sent priests to lay their hands on him. But when their exorcism was unable to cast out the demon, the Saint of God drew near, and having put his fingers in the man's mouth, he delivered him. The blessed man performed many other miracles, and by his prayers he often obtained what he asked for from the Lord.

Once a severe drought laid waste the fields of Auvergne, and, as the grass was dried up, there was no forage for the stock. At this time God's Saint was devoutly celebrating the Rogations before the Ascension of the Lord. On the third day, as the procession was already approaching the city gate, he was asked to intone the antiphon, with these words: "Blessed hierarch, if you devoutly intone the antiphon, we have such confidence in your holiness that we believe the Lord will immediately in His clemency vouchsafe to grant us an abundant rain." The holy Bishop prostrated himself on his hair — shirt in the middle of the road and prayed for a very long time with tears. Then he arose and intoned with all his strength the antiphon which they had requested, the words of which were drawn from the prayer of Solomon, as follows: *If heaven is shut and there is no rain because of the sins of the people, and turning to Thee they pray unto Thee, hear, O Lord, and remit the sins of Thy people, and give rain to the earth which Thou hast given to Thy people for an inheritance* (II Chronicles 6:26-27). And when they began to sing most devoutly, the humble prayer of the confessor penetrated even unto the ears of the Divine Majesty; and behold, the heavens grew dark and were covered with clouds, and before they had arrived

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***This paragraph has been added from *The History of the Franks*, III, 13.

at the gate of the city, there fell a heavy rain on all the land, so that all wondered and said that this was due to the blessed man's prayers.

5. Finally the priest of God grew old, to the point where he had not the strength to spit on the ground, but put a handkerchief to his mouth to wipe it. Even so, his eyes were not darkened, and his heart did not abandon the ways of God. He never turned away his face from the poor; he never feared the mighty man; but he always had in everything a holy liberty, so that he received a poor man's cloak with as much respect as if he had received an illustrious senator's toga. He died perfected in holiness and was buried in the basilica of Saint Stephen, to the left of the altar. Frequently, even now, at his tomb those with quartan fever are helped and their sadness alleviated.

NOTES

Saint Quintianus died about the year 527, on November 13, on which day his feast is kept. He signed the Acts of the Councils of Agde (506) and Orleans (511) in Gaul, as Bishop of Rodez (*Rutena* in Latin).

The historical background of St. Quintianus' life is set forth by St. Gregory in *The History of the Franks,* Book II, chapters 35, 36, and 37, and Book III, chapters 11, 12, and 13. At this time there was intense rivalry between the Franks under the newly-baptized King Clovis, and the Goths under Alaric II. The Franks defeated the Goths in many battles, and in the battle of Vouille near Poitiers (507) Clovis gained a great victory and killed Alaric. St. Quintianus, living under Gothic rule, was suspected of being friendly with the Franks, all the more in that he, like Clovis, was Orthodox, while the Goths were Arians.

With the advance of Frankish power, St. Quintianus came into favor with the Frankish King Theodoric, son of Clovis. Later, however, Theodoric evidently forgot this friendship when he was besieging Clermont. The conflicts of this time were largely inspired by the rivalries of the various still-barbarian kings; only gradually was the land of Gaul enlightened by Orthodox Christianity, whose roots became very deep.

The "Rogations" mentioned in this Life were first instituted by St. Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne (near Lyons) in the 5th century, at a time when, during Great Lent and the season of Pascha, the city was shaken by earthquakes and the attacks of wild beasts. They consisted of fasting, almsgiving, and special prayers with a religious procession (see *The History of the Franks,* II,

34). This custom quickly spread to the rest of Gaul, where it was celebrated just before the Feast of the Ascension.

The Church of St. Stephen, where St. Quintianus' body was placed, was built outside the walls of Clermont in the middle of the 5th century by the widow of Bishop Namatius of Clermont. In *The History of the Franks* (II, 17), St. Gregory describes how she had this church adorned with iconographic frescoes. The relics of St. Quintianus were later transferred to the church of St.-Symphorien-et-Saint-Genes, where they were still venerated as late as the 17th century. They have not been heard of since the French Revolution.

The Life and Ascetic Labors of Our Father, Elder Paisius, Archimandrite of The Holy Moldavian Monasteries of Niamets and Sekoul. Part Twenty.

85. THE DESTRUCTION OF NIAMETS MONASTERY*

In 1859-1861 the princedoms of Moldavia and Vlachia were joined together into a single Rumanian Kingdom under a ruler chosen by representatives of the Councils of both princedoms, the Sovereign Alexander Kouza. Having thus joined together both princedoms under his authority, the government of Prince Kouza wished to unite also the Churches of these princedoms, for which purpose it was decided to establish a single Church Synod. In the establishment of this Synod itself, needless to say, there was nothing anti-canonical. But the trouble was that the foundations upon which the Synod was established were, in actual fact, completely uncanonical. Kouza and his Ministers decided to meddle in church affairs and church institutions. They had the intention of enslaving the Church, depriving it first of all authority to make judgment upon the members of the government. According to this plan, the Synod was to consist not only of Bishops, but also of Priests and Deacons and even laymen. The governing of it was to be in accordance with the laws of the country and with contemporary progress, and not with any kind of church canons, which had already "outlived their age."

In 1864 three plans for new laws concerning church government were composed in the Ministry of Confessions without the participation of the clergy, and they were confirmed by the legislative body. According to these laws, the Synod would be in complete dependence upon the Minister of Confessions, who could assemble the Synod whenever he wished and could forbid it permis-

* Translated from "A Study and a Monograph of the History of the Church of Moldavia," by Bishop Arsenius of Pskov, St. Petersburg, 1904, as reviewed in the periodical *Soul-profiting Reading*, March, 1906.

sion to assemble, and could at any time close it; and every time it was he who defined the course of the Synod's deliberations, and from this course the Synod did not dare to depart. Under no circumstances did the Synod have the right to hinder freedom of conscience and the toleration of religions as defined by the civil legislative authority. The Rumanian language was made obligatory for all Orthodox churches.

In particular the new church laws were strict with regard to monasticism. It was forbidden to tonsure a person younger than sixty years. Exceptions were allowed only for cripples and the incurably ill, and likewise for young people who completed the theological course and were destined to occupy the highest church positions. For the tonsure of a nun there was assigned an age of fifty years, with the exception of cripples and the incurably ill and those who wished to devote themselves to service in public charitable institutions. All tonsures had to be performed in Rumania itself. No church authority had the right to perform a tonsure without the permission of the Synod and the Minister of Confessions.

Concerning the significance of these laws for the Church, Bishop Arsenius cites the following words of Professor Kurganov: "By these quite literally 'new' church laws, the Church was abolished as a divinely-established institution, and monasticism — such an important institution for the Church — was likewase abolished. The Church was entirely swallowed up by an idea of nationality and the State that was understood in a one-sided way and was expressed rationalistically. It is noteworthy that the Synod of the Rumanian Church not once was called the 'Holy and Sacred Synod,' as would follow from the idea of the Church itself. But it was called the General Synod of Rumania, in the secular sense. The State was placed as the chief 'god' of this Rumania, according to the Constitution, as the highest expression of the will of the nation, and thus the national church already a *priori* had to be subjected to it as a submissive slave. And it was so subjected. All the church reforms of Prince Kouza, the expression of which is these very church laws, are in their essence a violation of conscience such as the Orthodox had never yet encountered either under the Turkish domination or even under the pagan Roman government during the bloody persecutions against Christians — and this in a Constitutional State where the principle of freedom of faith and conscience was proclaimed as one of the basic principles of a free state! However, so it had to be. The principles expressed in the church laws and in the above-cited various Constitutions are identical: they are the expression of the free will of a free people under representative institutions. As a representative institution of the lower order (the

members of the Rumanian Synod being chosen by the clergy and laymen), the Synod had to be entirely subject to representative institutions of the higher order — the State itself, as expressing the general interests of all citizens, no matter what confession they might belong to. Thus the principles of the Rumanian State Constitution, accepted as the basis of the new church laws, inevitably had to lead to *the denial of the Church* as a divine institution, and to the complete subjection of it to the State, that is, in particular, to whichever Party had seized authority in its hands at any given time."

To the energetic protests against the new church laws on the part of certain Bishops, of the members of the Synod themselves, and of Patriarch Sophronius of Constantinople (the Church of Rumania being under the Patriarch of Constantinople the government of Kouza paid not the slightest attention. Those bishops who were unsubmissive were deprived of their episcopal sees, arrested, and even declared insane. The protest of the well-known Rumanian patriot, Neophytus Scriban, Bishop of Edessa and Ardjesh, which was presented by him personally to the Synod on December 7, 1865, was greeted by unworthy behavior on the part of the Minister Demetrius Karadja, who was present. Only in 1872, after a long and energetic battle of the best representatives of the Rumanian Church with the government, was this law changed and replaced by a new one, which, although it was still not perfect and not entirely canonical, at least gave a correct canonical foundation to the Synod.

But the above-mentioned church laws of the government of Prince Kouza — which were put into practice long before their publication — were only the beginning of the afflictions of the Orthodox Rumanian Church, and for this government itself they were only the approach to a whole series of restrictions and persecutions of the Church, which brought it in the end to complete destitution and abasement. Immediately after ascending the throne, Kouza, who hated the Church and everything churchly, so as utterly to abase and weaken the Orthodox Rumanian Church, conceived the idea of secularizing monastic proprety, that is, taking away from the Orthodox Rumanian monasteries their property which had been contributed to them at various times; at the same time, no church fund was established from which the monasteries which had thus been robbed could receive even the slightest subsidy in place of the confiscated property. It is true that attempts at the secularization of monastic property had been made before Kouza also, but they did not have such a decisive character and had not been executed in such a thieving way as occurred at the command of Kouza. His first victim in this regard was the famous Niamets Monastery in Rumania.

Niamets Monastery has the same significance for Moldavia as the Holy Trinity Monastery or the Kiev Caves Lavra have for Russia. For the course of five whole centuries it was the center of religious enlightenment in Moldavia. From its walls there came out many Rumanian Hierarch-patriots and monastic ascetics of the Orthodox faith and piety. From it there came the famous Moldavian Elder Paisius Velichkovsky, founder and father of Russian eldership (of the latter times). It is understand able that the Niamets Monastery possessed great movable and immovable property which had come to it from numerous contributors. Among these contributors there were Russian Sovereigns and members of the Russian Imperial Family. It is therefore not surprising that the Rumanian government many times strove to lay hands on the monastic property. Many times it strove to take away the Monastery's property, and at various times, paricularly in the forties and fifties of the 19th century, the Monastery had to suffer much and severely from the Constitutional Rumanian government, so that the monasic life began to fall into decline and disorder. But the final blow for Niamets Monastery was struck by the government of Kouza.

In 1859 the government designated a robber committee, to use the phrase of the historian of the Monastery, the worthy Archimandrite Andronicus, for the "putting in order of he Monastery property." What kind of committee this was is already evident from the fact that its members included clergymen who had not the approval of their own Metropolitan. This committee came to the Monastery literally for thievery. The Monastery was surrounded by soldiers, and the brethren, gathered together by the decree of the committee, were read the law concerning the confiscation of the Monastery property. The Superior of the Monastery, the Elder Gerasimus, could only answer, wih tears in his eyes, that the government was doing now what even the Turks had never dared to do during their domination of Rumania, whereas the Monastery for centuries had enjoyed the patronage of the Sovereigns, had given so much service to the Church and the State by its institutions of religious education, and always offered prayers for those in authority and never opposed, and does not oppose, the government, remembering the commandment of the Apostle concerning submission to authorities. But now it is surrounded by soldiers like an enemy fortress.

The words of the Elder made the committee furious, and particularly the Minister of Confessions, E Teriakiou, who was present, who shouted violently at the Elder, reproaching him with every kind of foul language, threatening him and saying that it was not the Elder's business to judge concerning the purpose of the committee, which could do whatever it pleased. After this the com-

mittee in actuality undertook to do in the Monastery whatever it pleased. The Monastery doors were sealed, as were the library, the office, and the archives where the documents of government donations were preserved. The Monastery treasury was robbed, which even the Turks had never done. After this the committee, with frightful cursings and blasphemies, set out for the vestry, where everything also was sealed, and they began to take over the Monastery storehouses. Having removed the Superior and the monastic council from the actual government of the Monastery, they themselves began to take charge of the Monastery business, saying that now the government was taking upon itself concern for the upkeep of the Monastery, and the monks now need not concern themselves for their daily living and could spend their whole time in prayer and repose. In confirmation of this the committee made a decree that the brethren be fed fish and cow's butter, and that they should be given wine, paying no heed to the fact that at that time it was the Sts. Peter and Paul Fast, when on some days there was not even allowed any kind of oil.

Then the committee strove to cause disturbance within the Monastery, and from among those monks who had betrayed their Superior they formed a special administrative committee to which they entrusted the charge of the Monastery until the final resolution of the question of putting the Monastery property in order. The so-called committee began arbitrarily to take over in the Monastery, threatening even the Metropolitan himself. The committee undertook an examination of the documents of the Monastery's gifts, hoping to find in them something on the basis of which they might pick a quarrel with the monks; but not finding anything of the sort, and seeing in them, on the contrary, the frightful curses of the contributors against those who would dare to take away from the Monastery what had been given it by them, they began to make fun of the concern of the dead patrons for their eternal salvation, saying: "Oh, if only someone might be found to curse our jackets and shoes so they wouldn't fall apart." After this the committee undertook to rent out the Monastery properties, accompanying this with the most outrageous lawless deeds. Through certain persons who had entered into a bargain with members of the committee, the Monastery property was sold off far below its value. The best Monastery propery was obtained almost for nothing by the very members of the committee. All the Monastery animals were sold, and all the Monastery's food supply. The brethren ate — and that not always — only unrefined rye bread; they walked about in torn garments and shoes, or fled the Monastery.

Having thus abolished the outward good condition of the Monastery, the committee took on its inward age-old monastic rules. It demanded that

the services be performed in Rumanian instead of Slavonic; when the Superior refused to do this, the Minister of Confessions began to yell wildly at him, and then togeher with other members of the committee, blasphemously threw the Slavonic books out of the Monastery catholicon. The same thing was done in the sketes which were under the Monastery. Likewise, the Monastery printshop was destroyed and sold to Jews far below its value. With the same aim of the utter devastation of the Monastery, they destroyed also the looms for weaving cloth for the brethren's garments, and from the Monastery churches all the adornments and precious articles which had been obtained by contributions or purchase over the course of many centuries were stolen. The ancient pious monastic customs and rites were subjected to ridicule and were abolished. Those who came to the Monastery, as well as the brethren, were ordered by the committee and the (Monastery's own) administrative committee to be fed meat even during fasts; with mockery they said to the Superior and the brethren, "We will feed you whatever we please." The Superior and the spiritual council of the monastery were overthrown and even arrested. The Monastery buildings, deprived of the necessary repairs, began to fall into complete disrepair, and the committee gave no money to restore them.

The lawless deeds of the committee and its hirelings continued until the Monastery fell into complete decline. Two years later one of the committee's hirelings, out of revenge for not being made Superior, set fire to the Monastery one night. Almost all of the Monastery fell victim to the fire, and at the present time it is only ruins in which but a few monks drag out a pitiful existence, receiving for their existence some crumbs from the government, which now possesses all the Monastery property.

The same fate befell also many other monasteries. The best monks of Niamets Monastery fled to Russia and there, in Bessarabia, under the patronage and the favorable cooperation of the Russian government, founded the New Niamets Monastery of the Ascension, which the Russian government allowed to make use of the revenue from the possessions of the Niamets Monastery which were in Russia.

Metropolitan Sophronius of Moldavia, who energetically protested to the government against the plundering of the Monastery, was seized by soldiers during the Liturgy which he was celebrating, and despite the bad weather, his old age and serious infirmity, he was led out by the soldiers with bared sabers to a place with a severe climate, in an uninhabited, unheated and damp house where he was kept under strict guard like some frightful criminal, and he was almost killed. Although he was later freed, he did not live long after this.

The same fate overtook also another zealous defender of Niamets Monastery, its Superior, the Elder Gerasimus. He was seized at night by soldiers in his cell and led into exile under guard; there, being under strict supervision, he soon died. The same fate overtook also many other worthy elders of Niamets Monastery.

Such were the acts of a liberal government in a constitutional country, where not only every citizen, but even criminals are guaranteed personal freedom by the law.

At the same time the government openly patronized and even cooperated in the most widespread Latin propaganda. Such a tactic of the government came from two equally false principles: the desire to draw nearer to the West, an aim which supposedly was to be aided by the Catholicization and Latinization of Rumania; and the fear of a false political danger on the part of Russia, which supposedly was thirsting to swallow up Rumania — a danger which was supposedly helped by the spiritual kinship in faith of the Russian and Rumanian populations. Prince Kouza joined to this yet more a hatred for Russia and Orthodoxy. It was precisely under him that there began an active and constant contact wih Rome. Little by little Roman Catholic schools appeared in Rumania, and even a seminary in Jassy — with the aid of the government — while the Orthodox seminaries were closed. Roman Catholic missionaries also appeared, receiving from the government the most flattering reception and even giving public lectures in the capital on the superiority of Catholicism to Orthodoxy, and the necessity for Rumanians to go over to Catholicism. In the capital of Rumania, a splendid Catholic Cathedral church was built, while the Orthodox Church does not have any such thing either in the capital nor in other large cities. Roman Catholics in Rumania have a complete hierarchy.

Such patronage was shown also to Protestantism, which conducted in Rumania open and brazen propaganda, in every way slandering and offending the Orthodox hierarchy, and they have even their own newspapers, in which offenses and slanders against the Orthodox Rumanian hierarchy occupy the chief place. Even the Old-Believers are patronized and have had their own bishop in Rumania since the first years of Kouza's reign.

Almost up to 1893 the clergy in Rumania were not allowed to take part in public education. Even religious instruction in the public schools was taught by laymen, and there have been cases when children end up not knowing a single prayer. The Minister of Public Education, Kont, proposed a law for public education which would entirely remove it from the public schools. In 1893, supposedly for economic reasons, but in actual fact so as to take the guidance

of religious education out of the hands of the clergy, six seminaries were suddenly closed, and the remaining few seminaries are under the supervision of the Minister of Public Education and have almost been removed from the influence of the Diocesan Bishops.

In the session of the Senate of Rumania, on December 16, 1899, the Metropolitan of Mo!davia, Joseph Ananiesku, publicly declared that the Church in Rumania is confined to a slavish dependence upon the State.

And so the demonic threatening in the vision of Abbot Sophronius came true. One monk from Niamets Monastery was secretly instructed to go to the Monastery's metochion in Bessarabia and make a home for the fleeing monks. With God's help this new Abbot, *Theophanes* (+Oct. 21, 1883), built the New Niamets and the Paisian tradition continued there. This is where the best biography of the great Elder Paisius was compiled. Not long before his death he gathered all his brothers and revealed to them that his elder, Fr. Neonil whom he served as a cell attendant for 19 years in the old Niamets, and who died 30 years ago, appeared to him from the other world and said, "Follow me, Theophanes." And he followed him to the better world to be in the company of Paisius' disciples.'**

86. BLESSED PAISIUS' CENTENARY*
1894

On the 15th (27th) of November, in the Ascension Catholicon of the Niamets Lavra, there was a solemn Liturgy and a pannihida served on the grave of Elder Paisius by three Rumanian Hierarchs: Joseph Ananiescou, Metropolitan of Moldavia from Jassy, Sylvester Balaneskou, Bishop of Husi, and Dositheus Periedian, Bishop of Botosani, vicar of Moldavia, in the presence of a great number of pilgrims.

The Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Rumanian Church has proposed that Blessed Paisius be canonized as a Saint, due to the great amount of miracles which occur by his prayers. His body was discovered to be incorrupt during the last investigation of them in 1872, as well as in the previous years of 1846, 1853, and 1861.

He left many disciples and fellow-strugglers in Rumania and in Russia, among whom the following are well known in Rumania: Basil, the Abbot

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** This paragraph from the periodical *Strannik* of 1884.

* From "Archimandrite Paisius Velichkovsky," George Samuryan, *Russki Palomnik*, no. 49, 1894, St. Petersburg, pp. 779 ff.

of Polana meruliu (Merlopolyany), near the city of Romni-Sarat, in the Buzeu Diocese; Gregory IV, Metropolitan of Ugrovalachia, heading the Diocese of Bucharest, the capital of Rumania (who died in 1834); Benjamin Costaki, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Sochava, with his see in Jassy; Elder Gerontius, Abbot of Caldarusani, near the city of Bucharest. In Russia also there were many disciples of Paisius Velichkovsky who renewed monastic life in the following dioceses: Olonets (Paleostrov Monastery), Finnish Diocese (Valaam and Konevets Monasteries), Novgorod Diocese (Tikhvin Monastery), also in Moscow, Kaluga, Tula, Orel, Kursk, Voronezh, Tambov (Sarov Monastery), etc.

His writings were published in Moscow in 1848 by Optina Monastery in the Kaluga Diocese, and there was also a second edition in 1892, although this was not complete.

In Rumania the name of Elder Paisius Velichkovsky up to the present time is revered with holiness, especially in the places that have been associated with his personal presence. His life and activity have been made the subject of several works in Rumanian, but unfortunately these works have not all been published. In Russia his life and activity have been studied by several scholars; especially outstanding is the work by Vasili Kazanaki, *Paisius Velichkovski and His Significance in the History of Orthodox Monasticism,* which was highly regarded by the academic committee in the St. Petersburg Theological Academy of 1889 (*Christian Reading,* St. Petersburg, 1894, July-August).

The most thorough study of the life and activity of the Elder Paisius is the one in the Rumanian language in four volumes by Schema-monk Andronik Badenscou, the Abbot of New Niamets in Bessarabia, who died August 12, 1893.

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

"OUT-OF-BODY" EXPERIENCES IN OCCULT LITERATURE

Researchers in today's "after-death" experiences almost invariably turn for elucidation of these experiences to that form of literature which claims to be based on experience of the "out-of-body" realm: the occult literature down the ages from the Egyptian and Tibetan *Books of the Dead* down to the occult teachers and experimenters of our own day. Hardly any of these researchers on the other hand, pay very serious attention to the Christian teaching on life after death, or to the Scriptural and Patristic sources upon which it is based. Why is this?

The reason is very simple: the Christian teaching comes from God's revelation to man of the fate of the soul after death, and it emphasizes chiefly the ultimate state of the soul in heaven or hell. While there is also an abundant Christian literature describing what happens to the soul after death, based on first-hand after-death or out-of-body experiences (as presented in the chapter above on the "toll-houses"), this literature definitely occupies a secondary place when compared to the primary Christian teaching of the soul's final state. The literature based on Christian experience is chiefly useful in elucidating and making more vivid the basic points of Christian doctrine.

In occult literature, however, exactly the opposite is the case: the chief emphasis is on the soul's experience in the "out-of-body" realm, while the ultimate state of the soul is usually left vague or open to personal opinions and guesses, supposedly based on these experiences. Today's researchers are much more easily attracted to the experiences of occult writers (which seem to be capable of at least some degree of "scientific" investigation) than to the teaching of Christianity, which requires a commitment of belief and trust and the leading of a spiritual life in accord with it.

In this chapter we will try to point out some of the pitfalls of this approach, which is by no means as "objective" as it seems to some people, and offer an evaluation of the occult "out-of-body" experiences from the point of view of Orthodox Christianity. In order to do this, we must look at some of the occult literature which today's researchers are using to elucidate "after-death" experiences.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead

*The Tibetan Book of the Dead** is an 8-th century Buddhist book which probably hands down pre-Buddhist traditions from a much earlier period. Its Tibetan title is "Liberation by Hearing on the After-Death Plane," and it is described by the English editor as "a mystic manual for guidance through the otherworld of many illusions and realms" (p. 2). It is read at the body of the newly-deceased for the benefit of the soul, because, as the text itself says, "during the moments of death various misleading illusions occur" (p. 151). These, as the editor notes, "are not visions of reality, but nothing more than . . . (one's own) intellectual impulses which have assumed personified form (p. 31). In the later stages of the 49 days of "after-death" experiences described in the book, there are visions of both "peaceful" and "wrathful" deities — all of which, in accordance with Buddhist doctrine, are regarded as illusionary. (We shall discuss below, in examining the nature of this realm, why these visions are indeed largely illusionary.) The end of this whole process is the final fall of the soul into

* Ed. by W. Y. Evans-Wentz, Oxford University Press, Paperback ed., 1960.

a "reincarnation" (also to be discussed below), which Buddhist teaching regards as an evil to be avoided by Buddhist training. Dr. C. G. Jung, in his Psychological Commentary on the book, finds these visions very similar to descriptions of the after-death world in the spiritistic literature of the modern West — both "give one a sickening impression of the utter inanity and banality of communications from the 'spirit world'" (p. 1i).

In two respects there are striking similarities between the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and today's experiences, and this accounts for the interest of Dr. Moody and other researchers in this book. First, the "out-of-body" experience described in the first moments of death is essentially the same as that described in today's experiences (as well as in Orthodox literature): the soul of the deceased appears as a "shining illusory body" which is visible to other beings of like nature but not to men in the flesh; at first it does not know whether it is alive or dead; it sees people around the body, hears the wailing of mourners, and has all sense faculties; it has unimpeded motion and can go through solid objects (pp. 98-100, 156-160). Second, there is a "primary clear light seen at the moment of death" (p. 89), which today's researchers identify with the "being of light" described by many people today.

There is no reason to doubt that what is described in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is based on some kind of "out-of-body" experience; but we shall see below that the actual after-death state is only one of these experiences, and we must beware of accepting just any "out-of-body" experience as a revelation of what actually happens to the soul after death. The experiences of Western mediums also can be genuine; but they certainly do not transmit actual messages from the dead, as they pretend to do.

There is some similarity between the*Tibetan Book of the Dead* and the much earlier Egyptian Book of the Dead*. The latter describes the soul after death as undergoing many transformations and encountering many "gods". There is no living tradition of interpretation of this book, however, and without

* *The Book of the Dead*, tr. by E. A. Wallis Budge, Bell Publishing Co., N.Y., 1960.

this the modern reader can only guess at the meaning of some of its symbolism. According to this book the deceased takes in succession the form of a swallow, a hawk of gold, a serpent with human legs and feet, a crocodile, a heron, a lotus flower, etc., and meets strange "gods" and other-worldly beings (the "Four Holy Apes," the hippopotamus-goddess, various gods with heads of dogs, jackals, apes, birds, etc.).

The elaborate and confused experiences of the "after-death" realm as described in this book are in sharp contrast to the clarity and simplicity of Christian experiences. Although also based, it may well be, on some kind of actual "out-of-body" experiences, this book is as full of illusory visions as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and certainly cannot be taken as an actual description of the state of the soul after death.

The Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg

Another of the occult texts which contemporary researchers are investigating holds more hope for being understood, for it is from our own modern times, is thoroughly Western in mentality, and purports to be Christian. The writings of the Swedish visionary Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) describe the visions of another world which began to appear to him in mid-life. Before visions began, he was a typical intellectual of the European "Enlightenment": fluent in many languages, a scholar and scientist and inventor, a man active in public life as an overseer of Sweden's mining industries and a member of the House of Nobles — in short, a "universal man" in the early age of science, when it was still possible for one man to master almost all the knowledge of his day. He wrote some 150 scientific works, some of which (such as his 4-volume anatomical treatise, *The Brain)* were far ahead of his time.

Then, in the 56th year of his life, he turned his attention to the invisible world and in the last 25 years of his life he produced an immense number of religious works describing heaven, hell, angels and spirits — all based on his own personal experience.

His descriptions of the invisible realms are disconcert-

ingly earth-like; in general, however, they are in agreement with the descriptions of most occult literature. When a person dies, according to Swedenborg's account, he enters the "world of spirits", which is half-way between heaven and hell.* This world, although it is spiritual and not material, is so much like material reality that a person does not know at first that he has died (461); he has the same kind of "body" and sense faculties as when in his earthly body. At the moment of death there is a vision of light — something bright and hazy (450) — and there is a "review" of one's life and its good and evil deeds. He meets his friends and acquaintances from this world (494), and for some time he continues an existence very similar to the one he had on earth, except that everything is much more "inward"; one is drawn to those things and persons for which one has love, and reality is determined by thought — as soon as one thinks of a loved one, that person becomes present as though called (494). Once one becomes used to being in this spirit world, he is taught by his friends concerning heaven and hell, and is taken to various cities, gardens and parks (495).

In this intermediate "world of spirits" one is "prepared" for heaven in a process of education that takes anywhere from a few days to a year (498) But "Heaven" itself, as described by Swedenborg, is not too different from the "world of spirits", and both are very similar to earth (171). There are courtyards and halls as on earth, parks and gardens, houses and bedrooms for "angels", with many changes of clothing for them. There are governments and laws and law-courts — all, of course, more "spiritual" than on earth. There are church buildings and church services, with clergymen who give sermons and who become confused if anyone in the congregation disagrees with them. There are marriages, schools, the raising and educating of children, public life — in short, almost everything to be found on earth that can become "spiritual". Swedenborg himself talked with many of the "angels" in heaven (all of whom, he believed, were only the souls of the dead),

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* Emanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell,* tr. by George F. Dole, Swedenborg Foundation, Inc., N.Y., 1976. section 421; sections in parentheses in the text above are all from this book.

as well as with the strange inhabitants of Mercury, Jupiter, and other planets; he argued with Martin Luther in "heaven" and converted him to his own beliefs, but was unsuccessful in persuading Calvin out of his belief in predestination. "Hell" is described as a similarly earth-like place where the inhabitants are characterized by self-love and evil actions.

One can easily understand why Swedenborg was dismissed by most of his contemporaries as a madman, and why even until quite recently his visions have seldom been taken seriously. Still, there have always been some who recognized that, for all the strangeness of his visions, he was in actual contact with unseen reality: his younger contemporary, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, one of the chief founders of modern philosophy, took him very seriously and believed the several examples of Swedenborg's "clairvoyance" that were known throughout Europe; and the American philosopher Emerson, in his long essay on him in *Representative Men,* called him "one of the mastodons of literature, not to be measured by whole colleges of ordinary scholars." Today, of course, the revival of interest in occultism has brought him to the fore as a "mystic" and "seer" not bound by doctrinal Christianity, and in particular the researchers in "after-death" experiences find remarkable parallels between their findings and his description of the first moments after death.

There can be little doubt that Swedenborg was in actual contact with invisible spirits and that he received his "revelations" from them. An examination of *how* he received these "revelations" will show us what is the actual realm these spirits inhabit.

The history of Swedenborg's contacts with invisible spirits — which he recorded in great detail in his voluminous *Journal of Dreams* and *Spiritual Journal* (2300 pages) — reveal precisely the characteristics of one entering into contact with the demons of the air, as described by Bishop Ignatius. From childhood Swedenborg practiced a form of meditation, involving relaxation and intense concentration; in time, he began to see a splendid flame during his meditation, which he accepted with trust and interpreted as a sign of "approval" of

his ideas. This prepared him for the opening up of communication with the realm of spirits. Later he began to have dreams of Christ and of being received into a society of "immortals", and he gradually became aware of the presence of "spirits" around him. Finally, the spirits began to appear to him in a waking state. The first of these latter experiences occurred when he was travelling in London: One night, after overeating, he suddenly saw a blackness and crawling reptiles on the floor, and then a man sitting in the corner of the room, who said only "Eat not so much" and disappeared in blackness. Although he was frightened at this apparition, he trusted it as something "good" because it gave "moral" advice. Then, as he himself related, "during the same night the same man revealed himself to me again, but I was not frightened now. He then said that he was the Lord God, the Creator of the World, and the Redeemer, and that he had chosen me to explain to men the spiritual sense of the Scripture, and that he himself would explain to me what I should write on this subject; that same night were opened to me, so that I became thoroughly convinced of their reality, the worlds of spirits, heaven and hell . . . Afterwards the Lord opened, daily very often, my bodily eyes, so that in the middle of the day I could see into the other world, and in a state of perfect wakefulness converse with angels and spirits."*

It is quite clear from this description that Swedenborg was opened up to contact with the *aerial realm of fallen spirits* and that all his later revelations came from this source. The "heaven" and the "hell" which he saw were also parts of this aerial realm, and the "revelations" which he recorded are a description of the illusions of this realm which the fallen spirits often produce for the gullible, with their own aims in view. A look at some other occult literature will show us more of the characteristics of this realm.

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* R. L. Tafel, *Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, vol. 1, pp. 35-6. See Wilson Van Dusen, *The Presence of Other Worlds* (*The Psychological-Spiritual Findings of Emanuel Swedenborg*, Harper and Row, N.Y., 1973, pp. 19-63, for a description of the opening of Swedenborg's "spiritual eyes."

The "Astral Plane" of Theosophy

19th and 20th century Theosophy, which is an amalgamation of the occult ideas of East and West, teaches in detail concerning this aerial realm, which it sees as composed of a number of "astral planes." ("Astral," meaning "of the stars," is a fanciful term to refer to the level of reality "above the earthly".) According to one resume of this teaching, "the (astral) planes comprise the habitations of all supernatural entities, the locals of gods and demons, the void where the thoughtforms dwell, the region inhabited by spirits of the air and other elements, and the various heavens and hells with their angelic and demonic hosts . . . With the help of ritual procedures, trained persons believe that they can 'rise on the planes,' and experience these regions in full awareness."*

According to this teaching, one enters the "astral plane" (or "planes", depending on whether this realm is viewed as a whole or in its separate "layers") at death, and, as in Swedenborg's teaching, there is no sudden change in one's state and no judgment; one continues to live as before, only outside the body, and begins to "pass through all the sub-planes of the astral plane, on his way to the heaven-world."* Each sub-plane is increasingly refined and "inward", and the progression through them, far from involving fear and uncertainty as do the Christian "toll-houses", is a time of pleasure and joy: "The joy of life on the astral plane is so great that physical life in comparison with it seems no life at all . . . Nine out of ten much dislike returning to the body." (Powell, p. 94.)

Theosophy, the invention of the Russian medium Helena Blavatskaya, was founded in the late 19th century in an attempt to give a systematic explanation of the mediumistic contacts with the "dead" which had been multiplying in the Western world since the great outbreak of spiritistic phenomenon in America in 1848. To this day its teaching on the "astral

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* Benjamin Walker, *Beyond the Body: The Human Double and the Astral Planes,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, pp. 117-8.

* A. E. Powell, *The Astral Body,* The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., 1972, p. 123.

plane" (although often not called by that name) is the standard one used by mediums and other dabblers in the occult to explain their experiences in the world of spirits. Although Theosophical books on the "astral plane" are filled with the same "sickening inanity and banality" that Dr. Jung finds to characterize all spiritistic literature, still, behind this triviality. there is a basic underlying philosophy of other-world reality that strikes a responsive chord in researchers today. Today's humanistic world-view is much more favorably disposed to an other-world that is pleasant rather than painful, that allows for gentle "growth" or "evolution" rather than the finality of judgment, that permits "another chance" to prepare oneself for a higher reality rather than determining one's eternal lot by one's behavior in earthly life. The teaching of Theosophy gives exactly these characteristics demanded by the "modern" soul" and it claims to be based on experience.

In order to give an Orthodox Christian answer to this teaching we must look more closely at the specific experiences which are undergone on the "astral plane." But where shall we look? The communications of mediums are notoriously unreliable and hazy; and in any case the contact made with the "spirit world" through mediums is too shadowy and indirect to constitute convincing proof of the nature of that world. The "after-death" experiences of today, on the other hand, are too brief and inconclusive to be taken as evidence of the actual nature of the other world.

But there *is* a kind of experience on the "astral plane" that can be studied in more detail. In Theosophical language it is called "astral projection" or "the projection of the astral body." It is possible, through the cultivation of certain mediumistic techniques, not merely to enter into contact with discarnate spirits, as ordinary mediums do (when their seances are genuine), but actually to enter into their realm of being and "travel" in their midst. One may well be skeptical on hearing of such experiences in ancient times but it so happens that this experience has become relatively common — and not only among occultists — in our own times, and there is already an extensive literature of first-hand experience in this realm.

"Astral Projection"

It is well known to Orthodox Christians that man can in fact be raised above the limitations of his bodily nature and journey to invisible realms. The exact nature of this journey will not concern us here. The Apostle Paul himself did not know whether he was "in the body or out of the body" when he was caught up to the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2), and there is no need for us to speculate as to how the body can become refined enough to enter heaven (if his experience was actually "in the body"), or what kind of "subtle body" the soul may be clothed in during an "out-of-body" experience — if indeed such things can be known in this life. It is enough for us to know that the soul (in whatever kind of "body") can indeed be raised up by God's grace and behold paradise, as well as the aerial realm of spirits under heaven.

Often in Orthodox literature such experiences are described as being "out of the body," as was St. Anthony's experience of the "toll-houses" while standing at prayer, described above. Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov mentions two ascetics in the 19th century whose souls likewise left their bodies while they were at prayer — Elder Basilisk of Siberia, whose disciple was the famous Zossima, and Schema-Elder Ignatius (Isaiah), a personal friend of Bishop Ignatius (Bishop Ignatius, *Collected Works,* vol. III, p. 75). The most striking "out-of-body" experience in the Orthodox Lives of Saints is probably that of St. Andrew the Fool for Christ of Constantinople (10th century), who, while his body evidently lay in the snow of the city streets, was raised up in spirit to behold paradise and the third heaven, a part of which he described to his disciple who recorded the experience (Lives of Saints, Oct. 2).

Such experiences occur only by the grace of God and quite apart from the will or desire of men. But "astral projection" is an "out-of-body" experience that can be sought and initiated by means of certain techniques. This experience is a special form of what Bishop Ignatius describes as the "opening of the senses", and it is clear that — since contact with

spirits is forbidden to men except by God's direct action — the realm that can be reached by this means is not heaven, but only the aerial realm of the under-heaven, the realm inhabited by the fallen spirits.

Theosophical texts which describe this experience in detail are so full of occult opinions and interpretations as to be largely useless in giving one an idea of the actual *experiences* of this realm. In the 20th century, however, there has been another kind of literature dealing with this experience: parallel to the rise of research and experiments in the field of "parapsychology," some individuals have discovered, whether by accident or by experiment, that they are able to have the experience of "astral projection," and they have written books describing their experiences in non-occult language; and some researchers have compiled and studied accounts of "out-of-body" experiences and have written about them in scientific rather than occult language. Here we shall look at several of these books.

The "earthly" side of "out-of-body" experiences is well described in a book by the Director of the Institute of Psychophysical Research at Oxford, England.* In answer to an appeal made in September, 1966, in the British press and on the radio, the Institute received some 400 replies from persons who claimed to have had personal out-of-body experiences. Such a response indicates both that these experiences are by no means rare in our days, and that those who have had them are much more willing than in previous years to discuss them without fear of being thought "crazy". Dr. Moody and other researchers have discovered the same things with regard to "after-death" experiences. These 400 persons were given two questionnaires to fill out, and the book was the result of a comparison and analysis of the replies to these questionnaires.

The experiences described in this book were almost all involuntary ones which were triggered by various physical conditions: stress, fatigue, illness, an accident, anesthetization, sleep. Almost all of them occurred in the proximity of the

* Celia Green, *Out-of-the Body Experiences,* Ballentine Books, N.Y., 1975.

body (not in any "spirit" realm), and the observations made are very similar to those made by people who have had "after-death" experiences: one views one's own body from "outside", possesses all sense faculties (even though in the body one might have been deaf or blind), is unable to touch or interact with one's environment, "floats" in the air with an extreme sense of pleasantness and well-being; one's mind is clearer than usual. Some persons described meetings with deceased relatives, or journeying to a landscape which seemed not part of ordinary reality.

One investigator of "out-of-body" experiences, the English geologist Robert Crookall, has gathered an enormous number of examples of them, both from occultists and mediums on the one hand and from ordinary people on the other. He summarizes the experience as follows: "A replica-body, or 'double' was 'born' from the physical body and took up a position above it. As the 'double' separated from the body, there was a 'blackout' in consciousness (much as the changing of gears in a car causes a momentary break in the transmission of power) . . . There was often a panoramic review of the past life, and the vacated physical body was commonly seen from the released 'double' . . . Contrary to what one would expect, no one described pain or fear as having been caused by leaving the body — everything seemed perfectly natural . . . Consciousness, as it operated through the separated 'double,' was more extensive than in ordinary life . . . There were sometimes telepathy, clairvoyance, and foreknowledge. 'Dead' friends were often seen. Many of the deponents expressed great reluctance to re-enter the body and so return to earth-life . . . This general pattern of events in out-of-body experiences, hitherto unrecognized, cannot be explained adequately on the hypothesis that all such experiences were dreams and that all the 'doubles' described were mere hallucinations. It can, on the other hand, be readily explained on the hypothesis that these were genuine experiences and that the 'doubles' seen were objective (though ultra-physical) bodies."*

This description is virtually identical, point-by-point, with

* Robert Crookall, *Out-of-the Body Experiences,* The Citadel Press, Secaucus, N.J., 1970, pp. 11-13.

Dr. Moody's "model" of after-death experiences (*Life After Life*, pp. 23-24). This identity is so precise that it can only be one and the same experience that is being described. If this is so, it is finally possible to define the experience that Dr. Moody and other investigators have been describing, and which has caused so much interest and discussion in the Western world for several years now. It is not precisely an "after-death" experience; it is rather the "out-of-body" experience which is only the ante-chamber to other much more extensive experiences, whether of death itself or of what is sometimes called "astral traveling (on which see below). Although the "out-of-body" state might be called the "first moment" of death — if death actually follows — it is a gross mistake to conclude from it anything whatever about the "after-death" state, unless it be the bare facts of the survival and consciousness of the soul after death, which hardly anyone who actually believes in the soul's immortality denies in any case.* Further, because the "out-of-body" state is not necessarily bound up with death at all, we must be extremely discerning in sifting the evidence supplied by extensive experiences in this realm; in particular, we must ask whether the visions of "heaven" (or "hell") which some are undergoing today have anything to do with the true Christian understanding of heaven and hell, or whether they are only an interpretation of some merely natural (or demonic) experience in the "out-of-body" realm.

Dr. Crookall — who has been the most thorough investigator in this field up to now applying to it the same caution and concern for detail that characterize his earlier books on the fossil plants of Great Britain — has gathered much material on "paradise" and "hades" experiences. He finds them both to be natural and virtually universal experiences in the "out-of-body" state, and he distinguishes them as follows: "Those who left their bodies naturally tended to glimpse bright and peaceful ('Paradise') conditions, a kind of glorious earth; while (those who were) forcibly ejected . . . tended to be in the relatively dim, confused, and semi-dreamlike conditions that

* Only a few sects far from historical Christianity teach that the soul "sleeps" or is "unconscious" after death: the Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, etc.

correspond to the 'Hades' of the ancients. The former met many helpers (including the 'dead' friends and relatives already mentioned); the latter sometimes encountered discarnate would-be hinderers" (pp. 14-15). Persons who have what Dr. Crookall calls a "mediumistic bodily constitution" invariably pass first of all through a dark, misty "Hades" region, and then into a region of bright light that seems like Paradise. This "Paradise" is variously described (by both mediums and non-mediums) as "the most beautiful scenery ever seen," "a scene of wondrous beauty — a vast parklike garden and the light there is a light that never was seen on sea or land," "lovely scenery" with "people dressed in white" (p. 117), "the light became intense," "the whole earth was aglow" (p. 137).

To explain these experiences, Dr. Crookall hypothesizes the existence of a "total earth" which comprises, on the lowest level, the physical earth which we know in everyday life, surrounded by an interpenetrating non-physical sphere with "Hades" and "Paradise" belts at its lower and upper boundaries (p. 87). This is, roughly, a description of what in Orthodox language is known as the aerial realm of fallen spirits of the under-heaven, or the "astral plane" of Theosophy; Orthodox descriptions of this realm, however, make no "geographical" distinctions between "upper" and "lower", and emphasize more the demonic deceptions which are an integral part of this realm. Dr. Crookall, being a secular researcher, knows nothing of this aspect of the aerial realm, but he does testify, from his "scientific" point of view, to an extremely important fact for the understanding of "after-death" and "out-of-body" experiences: *the "heaven" and "hell" seen by persons in these experiences are only parts (or appearances) of the aerial realm of spirits and have nothing to do with the true heaven and hell of Christian doctrine, which are the eternal dwelling-places of human souls (and their resurrected bodies) as well as of immaterial spirits.* Persons in the "out-of-body" state are not free to "wander" into the true heaven and hell, which are opened to souls only by the express will of God. If some "Christians" at "death" see almost immediately a "heavenly city"

with "pearly gates" and "angels", it is only an indication that what is seen in the aerial realm depends to some extent on one's own past experiences and expectations, even as dying Hindus see their own Hindu temples and "gods," True Christian experiences of heaven and hell (as we shall see in the next chapter) are of a different dimension altogether.

(To be continued)

ANNOUNCEMENT

With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Anthony of Western America and San Francisco, the

St. Herman Summer Pilgrimage

will be held this year once more on the feast of St. Herman's canonization, August 8, 9, and 10 (N.S.), at the St. Herman of Alaska Monastery, Platina, Calif.

After the Pilgrimage there will be a series of courses and lectures in basic Orthodox Christian knowledge, lasting until Sunday, August 6-19, the Feast of the Transfiguration.

For details, see the next Orthodox Word. The 1978 Pilgrimage is described in issue no. 84.

The Ancestral Sin and our Regeneration

HOMILY 37

By Saint Symeon the New Theologian

1. MAN LOST THE TRUTH AFTER HE WAS BANISHED FROM PARADISE.

BECAUSE ADAM believed the devil who had told him his lies, and tasted of the tree of knowledge, therefore, as one who had believed a liar, he fell away from the truth. After this, human nature labored a great deal seeking the truth but could not find it. This is clearly confirmed by all the wise men of Greece, who could by no means harmonize, unify, and direct on the right path the varieties of human wisdom, despite the fact that many used means for this end and wrote a multitude of lenghy works in which they examined virtue and vice from all points of view.

Truth is from God. It is contained in the Word of God, and it is attained by the grace of Christ. Grace in Christ Jesus, by its unutterable power, simplified the many separate and complex views, corrected and united them in a kind of physical and unshakable unity, showing thereby that all other means and approaches for this are ineffective, impractical, and useless. Those who are guided by these means embark on investigations in order to find the truth, but they do not succeed in finding it: it rightly is concealed from them. For since man of his own will and without any violence accepted a lie and believed it, he was condemned to seek the truth and not to find it; to run in pursuit of it and not to attain it. And in addition, since truth has been concealed from us

because we believed lies, in the same way truth is again found by us when we believe in truth. Adam believed a lie which was hidden and not obvious; but we believe in a great and evident mystery — in God Incarnate. That lie in itself contained an implausibility because it went against the direct commandment of God; while this great mystery of the Incarnation of Christ has the witness of its truth from the name of God. That lie, as soon as Adam believed that it was truth, was immediately revealed as a lie, because the one who believed it was cast down by it into corruption and death; while this mystery, being believed, is revealed as truth because it delivers the one who believes it from corruption and death, since by its power sin is taken away from the believer and there is given to him the blessed state, or righteousness. Thus both the truth and the lie are evident by their ends.

2. THE SIN OF THE DEVIL AND THE SIN OF ADAM.

If you will understand what kind of sin the devil committed, and what kind Adam committed, you will find nothing else but pride alone. But the devil and Adam became proud by reason of the great glory which they were vouchsafed in abundance. Being clothed with glory, not after humility and disgrace, for this very reason they became proud. They had never seen humility and did not know what this humility and disgrace might be which follow when one is thrown down from the heights of glory; therefore, not having the fear which comes from this happening, they became proud. Just think, then, how great was the humility of the Lord Jesus when He, being God, humbled Himself even to voluntary death and died on the Cross a death which served as punishment for the worst kind of people. And thus, there was one sin, pride, and one virtue, great humility. But who among us, since we now find ourselves in such belittlement and poverty, will begin to be proud, unless he be senseless and a fool? In the present life no one has the divine power in himself to manifest a brilliant glory, and there is no one who is clothed with glory before humility and disgrace; but every man who is born in this world is born inglorious and insignificant, and only later, little by little, advances and becomes glorious.

3. A MAN IS SINFUL FROM HIS VERY CONCEPTION.

Therefore, if anyone, having experienced beforehand such disgrace and insignificance, shall then become proud, is he not senseless and blind? That saying that calls no one sinless except God, even though he has lived only one

day on earth, does not refer to those who sin personally, because how can a one-day old child sin? But in this is expressed that mystery of our Faith, that human nature is sinful from its very conception. God did not create man sinful, but pure and holy. But since the first-created Adam lost this garment of sanctity, not from any other sin but from pride alone, and became corruptible and mortal, all people also who come from the seed of Adam are participants of the ancestral sin from their very conception and birth. He who has been born in this way, even though he has not yet performed any sin, is already sinful through this ancestral sin.

4. AND MAN IS REBORN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN HOLY BAPTISM.

For this reason there has come another birth, or rebirth, which regenerates man through Holy Baptism by the Holy Spirit, again unites him with the Divine nature as it was when he was created by the hands of God, restores all the powers of his soul, renews them and brings them to the condition in which they were before the transgression of first-created Adam; in this way it leads him into the Kingdom of God, into which no one unbaptized can enter, and enlightens him with its light and grants him to taste its joys. Thus each one who is baptized again becomes such as Adam was before the transgression, and is led into the noetic Paradise and receives the commandment to work it and keep it — to work it by fulfillment of the commandments of Jesus Christ Who has recreated him, and to keep it by the keeping of the grace of the Holy Spirit which was given to him through Holy Baptism, confessing that the power of this grace which dwells in him fulfills together with him the commandments of Christ. In this consists the keeping. And as it is impossible for a house to stand without a foundation, so also it is impossible for the soul which believes in Christ to manifest a God-pleasing life if in it there will not be laid as a foundation the grace of the Holy Spirit. For fasting, and vigils, and sleeping on the floor, and prostrations, and praying, and every other suffering of evil is nothing without Divine grace. And if you hear that anyone after evident Christian works has fallen away from Christ, know that at that time he was without the grace of God. For the Holy Spirit gives life to the soul, as the soul gives life to the body; and the soul becomes strong, firm, and constant.

Great is this mystery. Let man be reverent before it, let him pay heed to it and preserve it. By this grace of the Holy Spirit there is performed in the heart the sacrifice of praise, and the heart itself is made pure, contrite, and humble, and knowing that it has nothing of its own it cannot be exalted in pride.

This humility of a heart that is contrite and belittles itself, this humility that is true and not for show, out of vainglory, is precisely the sacrifice of praise which is offered to God. Impure before the Lord is not every sinner, but rather everyone who is highminded and proud, because there is no one without sin. But one who is humble of heart is righteous and acts righteously, for he is filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit which instructs him in every good and strengthens it in him. This grace gives to him that holy thing without which no one may behold the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). Therefore it is said: *Let the impious one be taken away, lest he see the glory of the Lord* (Isaiah 26:10). And who is this impious one? The one who is high-minded, in whom the degree of impiety is equal to the degree of his pride; and, on the contrary, in the one who is humble of heart, the degree of piety is equal to the degree of his humility.

But who is this one who is humble of heart? Not the wise man, not the one who knows much, not the scholar, not the artist, not the workman — but he who has the grace of the Holy Spirit which, cleansing the soul of every sin and teaching it to live righteously and God-pleasingly, gives to it true wisdom and knowledge and ability to act.

5. WHAT WAS IT THAT THE KINGS AND PROPHETS DESIRED BEFORE THE COMING OF CHRIST?

It was for this that the Son of God became man and died, giving Himself as redemption for the whole of human nature. However, His death was an indispenable sacrifice also for the pious ones who died before His coming in the flesh. For after the transgression of Adam no one even among the righteous could be saved, since all men were subject to the sin of the forefather Adam, to corruption and death, and the fiery sword allowed no one into the Paradise from which Adam had been banished, since those holy mansions of Paradise receive only souls which are immaculate and pure from every sin, as the Apostle says: *Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption* (I Cor. 15:50). Therefore, it was necessary that the incorruptible Son of God, by means of His corruptible flesh, should be given as a sacrifice so as to redeem those righteous ones from corruption. For by themselves they could not again come into the incorruption from which Adam had fallen away; but this was the work of the great dispensation of Christ, which was performed with true judgment and righteousness. And for those who were born after the Nativity of Christ, He also is a sacrifice and food by means of the communion of the most pure Mysteries, in which he renews and recreates man through the union into which He enters with those

who receive Communion; and by the unutterable power of the creative Divinity He most intimately joins them with Himself and penetrates them with Himself, that is, makes them gods by grace, just as fire through its penetration makes into fire those hard bodies which receive it and are penetrated by it, as for example, iron, bronze, and similar things, it makes fire. However, He does not change their nature, but causes only that they, as long as they are in such union with the fire, are themselves fire. And this is what the prophets, kings, and righteous ones desired who were before Christ, since they foresaw those who were to be flesh of the flesh of Christ, and bone of His bones, and they saw themselves deprived of such a great good thing.

6. A SPIRITUAL FATHER SHOULD FIRST OF ALL INSTRUCT THOSE COMING TO CONFESSION AND TEACH THEM THE MYSTERY OF FAITH, AND THEN LAY UPON THEM A PENANCE.

For those who have been instructed in this great mystery of Christianity and, having understood it, have become believers and faithful to it and later fell, being men who bear flesh — there is no other means to restore what has been lost than repentance in everything in which they have sinned. They should hasten to the spiritual physician and, having confessed their sin and opened their wound to him, they should with submission and desire accept the penance which is in accordance with the canons, such as their spiritual father will lay upon them, because these penances unloose the bonds of sin and serve for the wounds as a suitable treatment for the soul, so that they may be healed. It is essential, I say, that those who sin after Baptism bear a penance, because they have already been enlightened and have *tasted of the heavenly gift* (Heb. 6:4), that is, in experience have known the power of Christ, and therefore they should have manfully stood against temptation and not sinned, as the Apostle says, *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under sin, but under grace* (Rom. 6:14).

If they had not disdained the grace of God which they had already known, then it would not have allowed them to sin. They made themselves guilty of the blood of Christ after they had cleansed their conscience from dead works so as to serve the living and true God. Therefore, they have need of a second cleansing through repentance, which is joined with labors and sweat, with groans and tears, so that each of them might say to God, *Behold my lowliness and my toil, and forgive all my sins* (Ps. 24:18). This is necessary not because

God has need of the labors and sweat of the one who repents, but so that the one who is repenting, having received the grace of God without labor, might not again disdain it as before and might not for this be condemned eternally to burn in the unquenchable fire of hell.

But those who do not know the mystery of Christianity, which means the greater part of those who have been baptized, who are called "Christians" as being baptized but have not been taught the Christian teaching and remain totally ignorant, and, I will say so, unenlightened (enlightened by Baptism, but not enlightened by knowledge), because they do not know and do not understand in truth what the mystery of Christianity is — when such ones in repenting confess their sins committed by them after Baptism, one should not bind their spirit too much and lay upon them difficult penances, because this will not be profitable for them, since they, being not instructed and not enlightened, and not having knowledge of the mystery of Christ, cannot feel as is proper these bindings and penances. They believed in ignorance, and in ignorance they sinned, and inasmuch as they sinned without understanding, they cannot understand as is fitting the sensibleness of their spiritual treatment.

And thus, for those who are instructed and enlightened and know the mystery of Christianity, according to the measure of their knowledge and their sin, that is, judging by what kind of knowledge and awareness they have of the mystery of Christianity and how severe a sin they have committed — for these ones are required the bindings and the treatments and the scorching and the suffering of evil, that is, fasts, vigils, lying on the floor, bending of the knee, and the rest. But for those who did not know and were not instructed in the mystery of Christianity, there are required in future instruction, announcement of the teaching of the faith, and enlightenment, and only after this the canonical penance. For it is senseless to bind and scorch, that is, to lay a penance according to the canons upon one who is unable to feel, just as it is senseless to give treatment to a dead person.

However, as the divine Paul says, *As many as have sinned in the law,* that is, with knowledge of the mystery of Faith and Christianity, *shall be judged by the law,* that is, they must be judged and given penances according to all the strictness of the sacred canons. But those who *have sinned without the law,* that is, do not know everything that pertains to faith and that is essential for salvation and have not been instructed in it, *shall also perish without the law* (Rom. 2:12), that is, even without the application to them of all the strictness of the canons, they will perish (if they do not repent), even though they might uselessly offer in their defense the fact that they did not know how they were obliged to act; for the Lord says, *This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached*

in all the world for a witness unto all nations (Matt. 24:14). If in this way the nations are condemned (for ignorance), all the more will those Christians be condemned who, being in the enclosure of the Church of Christ, do not know the true teaching of Christian piety because they did not take care to be instructed in it in the proper way, out of carelessness and disdain for such a great work which was performed for us by the Son of God. For them, He, being God, became man and endured extreme mockery, dying on the Cross as if He were an evildoer.

7. EVERY CHRISTIAN MUST RECEIVE A DIVINE CHANGE.

It is a great good thing to believe in Christ, because without faith in Christ it is impossible for anyone to be saved; but one must also be instructed in the word of truth and understand it. It is a good thing to be instructed in the word of truth, and to understand it is essential; but one must also receive Baptism in the name of the Holy and Life-giving Trinity, for the bringing to life of the soul. It is a good thing to receive Baptism and through it a new spiritual life; but it is necessary that this mystical life, or this mental enlightenment in the spirit, also should be consciously felt. It is a good thing to receive with feeling the mental enlightenment in the spirit; but one must manifest also the works of light. It is a good thing to do the works of light; but one must also be clothed in the humility and meekness of Christ for a perfect likeness to Christ. He who attains this and becomes meek and humble of heart, as if these were his natural dispositions, will unfailingly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and into the joy of His Lord.

Moreover, regarding all those who are running on the path of God according to the order I have indicated, if it happens that natural death should cut off their course in the midst of this, they will not be banished from the doors of the Kingdom of God, and these doors will not be closed before them, according to the limitless mercy of God. But regarding those who do not run in such a way, their faith also in Christ the Lord is vain, if they have such. To Him may there be every glory, honor and worship, with His Unoriginate Father and the Life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 50)

Despite the large number of people, everything proceded with exceptional good order and organization. Especially in the church itself, which was so crowded that sometimes one could not even raise one's hand to cross oneself, the faithful observed perfect order and a silence that was interrupted only by the heartfelt singing of prayers. It seemed that this mighty singing with oneness of soul came from the very depths of the Orthodox Russian people, as mighty and one in soul in its faith as it once was in Holy Russia.

A spiritual exaltation was felt by the faithful not only during the services, but also during the religious-prayerful meal which culminated the solemnities of Glorification. This trapeza was to some extent a kind of continuation of the preceding church solemnities. Prayers were sung with the same oneness of soul as at the services. A total silence, despite the immense hall packed with people, was maintained durnig the reading of the Life of Blessed Xenia and the cases of miraculous help by her prayers, as well as during the accounts of witnesses who had been personally granted her help.

The venerators of St. Xenia the Blessed of Petersburg parted and left for their own homes, exhausted by the solemn events of the days of Glorification, but winged with spiritual joy.

A Participant

(*Orthodox Russia,* 1978, no. 19)

2. Pilgrims to New York

In all justice one must say that the Lord visits us with great mercies. The Glorification of Holy Blessed Xenia was very spiritual and touching. I gathered a whole busload and several automobiles full of our parishioners, and we set out early in the morning for the Synod. On the way we read morning prayers, and then the whole way we sang religious hymns. On the way back we served the first moleben to the Blessed One, and the next day, Monday, the first moleben in church, where quite a few people gathered.

A second joy for us was the pilgrimage to Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville. Again we gathered a busload. Again with prayers and religious hymns we made our journey for the feast of the Protection, and we remained in the monastery until Sunday, three days in all. The services in the Monastery are indescribable.

Archpriest Valery Lukianov
Howell, New Jersey

3. The Celebration in Melbourne, Australia

We began to prepare for the glorification of Blessed Xenia in the Melbourne parish long before the event. At every service the priest of the church, Fr. Vladimir Evsukoff, spoke about Blessed Xenia, recalling her miraculous help and depicting her image as a great ascetic and God-pleaser. A short Life of her was given out, both in Russian and English.

Finally came the day of Glorification, beginning on Saturday, Sept. 23. The church, adorned with flowers and palms, was sparkling-clean. With the church almost full, the last panikhida was celebrated before the All-night Vigil.

When the Vigil began, the church was full. At the singing of "Praise ye the name of the Lord," the Royal

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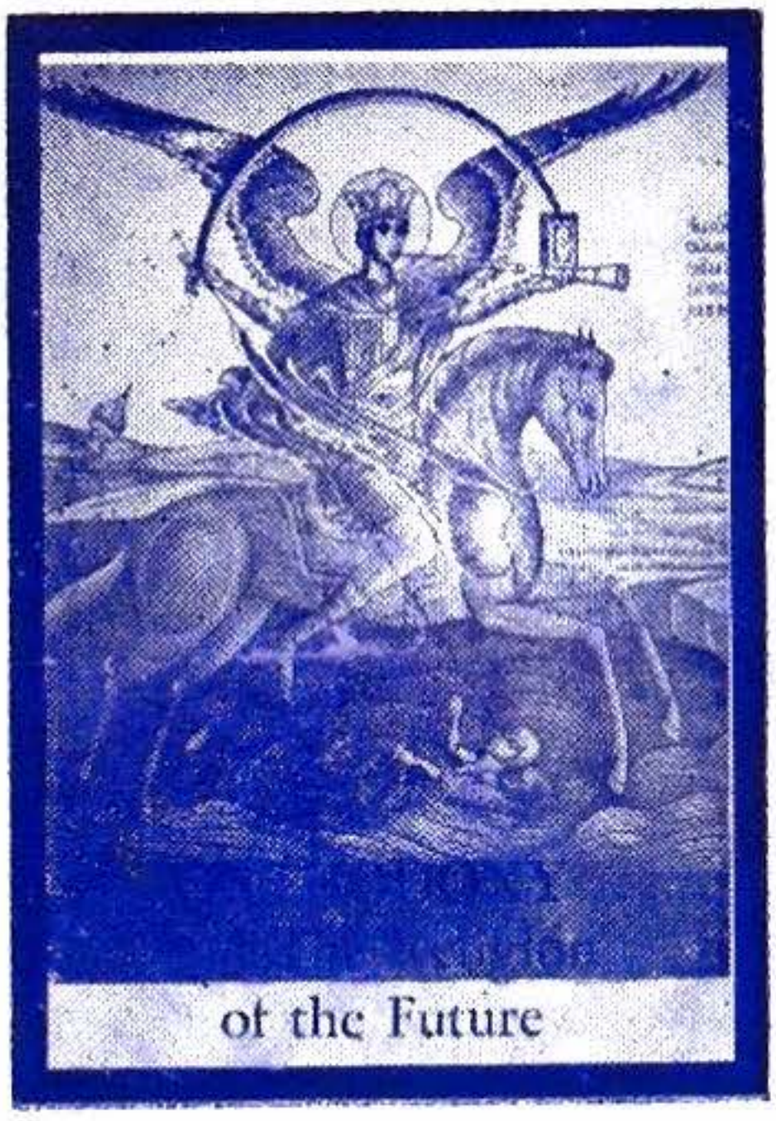

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